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MASS COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL CONVENTION.

TO THE MERCHANTS, BANKERS AND OTHERS
OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA:

There are two great objects which we desire as the result of the momentous struggle which is now pending. One is Political, the other is Commercial and Financial.

The first has been thoroughly organized and under the direction of the ablest minds in our Confederacy, and with the blessing of God, appears to be rapidly progressing to a satisfactory conclusion. The second, and in our estimation the greatest and most important, has not, as yet, an organization, and is in great danger of being lost by the success of the first—before any well digested plans have been adopted for its attainment.

We feel it to be our duty, therefore, to ourselves and our country, to seek to awaken the public mind to the incalculable importance of seeing to it, that our forces are promptly mustered and well equipped for the coming struggle, our plans thoroughly discussed and well matured, that by prompt and combined action when the movement shall be made, we shall ensure entire success and become as we seek to be, not only politically, but commercially and financially *free and independent*.

Have we not the skill and energy in our Confederacy which is needful to conduct our commercial and financial affairs as well abroad as at home? If not, we fear we must be content as heretofore, to allow them to remain in the hands of, and be conducted by others.

Shall the profits arising from our immense trade with Foreign countries continue to flow into the hands of those who are inimical to our peace and welfare, or shall the benefits arising therefrom be retained by us and transmitted as a rich legacy to our children?

A mighty and systematic effort has been made by Merchants and Bankers at the North to transfer to, and engross almost the entire profits of Southern trade in their own hands. Our institutions have been decried to the world in the hope that by this means they might drive from us the sympathies of other commercial nations, and obstruct, if not wholly prevent *direct intercourse* between us and them.

With these facts before us, is it not time we should awaken to the vital importance of instant, wise and decided action upon this subject?

One of the greatest obstacles in the way of the establishment of *direct trade* with foreign countries—immediately upon the opening of the ports of our Confederacy—is the fact that our Merchants are comparatively unknown in foreign markets, and have no credit established there. Although, *the products of the Southern*

States have constituted the basis of credits and exchange between the late United States and those nations for more than a half century; in a financial and commercial sense, we are unknown to each other—our bills of exchange having been drawn by Northern Houses, and the vast amount of their productions consumed by us—imported through the same channel—so little have we been known in these transactions, that years would be required in the ordinary course of events, to build up that trade and establish that confidence which is absolutely necessary in commercial transactions, which are founded on a system of credits.

It is clear, therefore, that some extraordinary measures must be devised, to enable us to free ourselves from these impediments to our commercial credit and independence, and prevent our falling back into the old channel as soon as our ports are again open. It is, moreover, desirable that our products, other than our great staple, should be fully made known to the world, and the great advantage to foreign nations of a direct trade with us, and we should all unite our efforts in the promotion of this great work.

We, therefore, cordially invite the Merchants, Bankers and others of the Confederate States, to meet us in Mass Convention, in the City of Macon, on the 11th day of October next, for the purpose of devising some plan for establishing a system of credits between the Confederate States of America and Foreign countries, which may be practicable and available to all desiring to use it, and which will also command the hearty support of the citizens of our whole country.

We earnestly invite the assistance and co-operation of the press of the Confederate States, in bringing the subject fully before the people and the presence of its members on the occasion named.

We would also, respectfully suggest to the various Chambers of Commerce and other Societies within the Confederacy, organized for similar purposes,—the propriety of appointing Committees at an early day for the purpose of a due and deliberate investigation of this important subject, and proposing some plan to be submitted to the Convention at its meeting.

Very respectfully,

WM. B. JOHNSTON, Presid't,

Macon Chamber of Commerce.

HENRY L. JEWETT, Sec'y,

Macon Chamber of Commerce.

Macon, Georgia, July 29th, 1861.

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